
Sew An Accordion Travel Pouch with Faith Hale

Chapter 1 - Sew An Accordion Travel Pouch

Overview

- I've seen so many of these pouches while looking in antique shops, and there's a good chance your grandmother used one of these to store her jewelry in while traveling. I'm Faith Hale. I'm a professional crafter, and in this class I'm going to show you how to make a vintage inspired accordion pouch. We'll use two pieces of lightweight quilting cotton and we'll draft our own pattern. When we're completed, we'll have a five pocket pouch. It's a bit of a brain teaser, but when it comes together, it's so satisfying.

Materials

- You'll need less than a half a yard of two different fabrics, which I love. Using a really special fabric for the outer wrapper. We'll be cutting it to 30 and a half inches wide and 12 and a half inches tall. We'll also be using a piece of our lining fabric for a strap. We're doing a wrap around strap, and that'll be cut to two and a half inches wide to 18 inches long. I'm working with a medium weight quilting cotton. You're going to want to stay on the lighter side. If it's too heavy, it'll be really hard to stitch through. You'll also need a quilting ruler. I like this long, 24 and a half inch ruler for making our long cuts. And you don't have to go out and buy a 12 and a half inch ruler, but if you have one on hand, it's very handy for this specific project. You also need a rotary cutter, a pokey tool for turning our strap inside out, your favorite marking pen. I also have pins, scissors, and we're using a yard of acrylic yarn to help us turn our strap inside out. You'll need your sewing machine with complimentary thread. We'll also be using an iron and an ironing surface. You'll need a cutting mat. And when you're selecting your fabric, make sure you're using a mid or a lightweight fabric. You can experiment later on with lining it with flannel or satin. Maybe the outside fabric can be something a little bit thicker, but for your very first time, having two pieces of fabric that are of equal weight will really help you out.

Sew the tie

- There's a lot of different closures you could use for this piece, but I really like a wrap tie. I feel like it really accommodates whatever you're going to put into your pouch. We're also going to be using a method for turning this tie inside out that I really like. We're inserting a piece of string before we tie it so that we can use that to pull it through. Use your preferred method if you like to use a bodkin, a loop turner, a safety pin, whatever works best for you. This is just my favorite. We'll be folding our tie in half lengthwise and sewing down with a quarter of an inch seam allowance. But before we start sewing, insert your yarn. I like using a synthetic yarn for this. I feel like it's a little bit stronger and keep about a half an inch poking out. We're going to keep it as close to the crease as possible so we don't accidentally sew over it. And you are welcome to sew across and down. I like giving it a little bit of a bevel. I love the effect that gives. So I'll be sewing from this corner at about a 45 degree angle. If you're sewing with a print, you'll wanna be sure that your right sides are together. Pivot with your needle down and so the rest of the way down, keeping your ya as tucked in as you can. Leave yourself a quarter of an inch seam allowance and snip off that corner. And I'm gonna just cut out an extra little wedge right here. And this is a lot harder on thicker fabrics, but we might have luck today. So I'm gonna push in and the yarn a little bit. Oh, worked right away.

Amazing. And luckily this held, look at that. Just barely snip it. As close as you can. Give it a good press under your iron. And if you'd like, you can top stitch all the way around. I prefer not to. I like it looking a little bit more organic, but top stitching would make it look a lot more crisp. I am using my fingers to roll the seams open before I press it so that the seam is nice and straight on the side. - That's so nice.

Draft and sew the pouch

- Begin by ironing your lining and your outer fabrics together so they're nice and crisp. You might even wanna use a little bit of spray starch and lay them down on your mat with the right sides of the fabric together. We'll start by adding quarter of an inch seam allowances all the way around to each side. I'm lining up my fabric so it extends over an inch mark by a quarter of an inch, but this is more of a backup. We're focusing our attention on our ruler, and this will end up on the wrong side of our fabric. And it's erasable of course. So I'm gonna go along the bottom. This is where our 12 and a half inch ruler comes in handy. We'll be marking in 12 inches from the first line we drew, and these rulers are 12 and a half inches. So don't let that extra half an inch trip you up. We're going 12 inches in from our seam line and repeat on the other side. Now we'll measure four inches down from our top seam line just in this center portion. Actually, we need to go all the way across. At this point we're going to add seam allowances to these portions. This will be cut away. These will become our pages. This will become our top flap. This right here, so we'll be sewing along this line, sewing up over, down and over. So at a quarter of an inch here, a quarter of an inch here, here, and here. So again, we're sewing along these inner lines. We're cutting along these outer lines. I'm gonna use my rotary cutter to cut most of this 'cause I can get it nice and straight. But I am going to use my hand scissors when it gets into this point just to make sure it's really precise. And now we'll be ready to sew. We'll sew all the way around the edge, leaving a two inch opening over here. There's one more step before we're ready to sew. We have to insert the tie we made. We're going to put that along the top here in between the two layers. So be very careful peeling back your lining. This is where the pins help us out too. We'll pin right in the middle of our tie and we'll be putting this in between the two layers curled up out of the way while we sew. Flatten it and make sure it's not within any of the seam allowances so you don't accidentally sew it pin at key points. So the corners, these parts, and we'll be ready to sew all the way around with a quarter of an inch seam allowance, leaving a two inch gap on one of the sides. When you get to any of the junctures, be sure your needle is down. When you pivot, you'll clip all of your external corners and snip your internal corners. Everybody has their own preferences for how to turn things inside out. I like to start kind of close to the opening, but also we have our tie on the inside. So if we can grab it, that'll definitely get us halfway there. - Oh, let's sneak around. I see it. - And whatever pokey tool you used to help turn out our tie, you can stick it in to help you get it perfectly inside out. This part is just fussy and a bit of a struggle, but be patient with yourself. Take your time, you'll get there. I like to finger press out my seams before I press 'em with the iron just to make sure that everything is as crisp as possible. Also, if you have any visible marks from your marking pen, go ahead and take them out. Now when you press, be sure to keep this quarter of an inch seam allowance folded in.

Sew the pockets

- This is the most exciting part. We'll form our pockets by first folding the entire piece in half, and we'll be marking out six inches from our center crease. Ideally, this edge will be lined up and this edge will be lined up. If they're not precisely, this is the one we're gonna prioritize. We'll measure six

inches from the folded edge. And if you have a ruler that has an extra half inch, don't let that trip you up. Make a mark from the top to the bottom, and I think it's helpful to pin at the top and the bottom. And then we sew along this line. Do what you need to do to secure the beginning and end of the seam. I'm gonna leave my tails free and not them, but if you wanna do a back stitch, that works as well. I am going to put a pin in this bottom fold just to help us line up our next step. Make sure the pin is hanging off the edge that you're not in the middle of the seam, and we will fold the seam. We just stitched matching the center point like so. Ooh, it's taking shape. I love this part. You can use your ruler to make sure that you're lining up. You're exactly in the middle. Ooh, that's so shiny. Yep. Looks like we're right where we need to be and we will iron this open. So the important part is ironing these creases. I am gonna knot these off before we move on to the next step. And you can clip your tails if you want to, but I'm going to sew them in just for a really nice strong seam. Okay, open it back up and we'll sew six inches from this seam line. Oh, we're so close. Give these a quick knot. This is a real moment of truth. We're going to iron open the second scene. So here's our first one. Our second one, oh boy, it's working. And the seam should lie exactly on top of the previous seam. Summing up your most fastidious attention to be sure that the sides are lined up. The bottom hasn't shifted. I like to do one side, then the other, and then we'll also fold this open. And if this center one is a little bit off, that is totally fine. We can camouflage that on the next step. We're gonna find the point exactly in the middle. It should be at four inches and make a mark. So for me, it ended up being seven and three quarters. Is this total length from the very bottom to the very top. So our center is going to be at three and seven eighths. You can pin if you want to. This is quite a few layers of fabric, so I'm not going to try, but then we'll bring it back to the machine and sew it along. This line we just made, there's so many layers that I find it helpful to ham, crank my first few stitches. Make sure your tails are out of the way. We are so close, so close. Our final seams will be sowing these center pouches together. Look at that. It's probably easier to sew in your tails at this point before we bring our pockets together. So I'm gonna go ahead and do that. I'll trim the ends to be even. And ideally we wanna get both threads into the needle at once, but if you have to do it one at a time, it'll just take you twice as long and we've already nodded it. So we're just going to insert our needle fit right in the seam there, and we'll pop it out about an inch away. Tag it up and snip it off and it should disappear back into that hand sew in the rest of your tails. Our final step is to sew together these side pockets. Now this is a real lesson for us all. If you are not super duper ultra precise, your pockets may not line up perfectly. It looks like on this side my pocket mostly matches up, but on this side my pocket is a bit askew off by, oh gosh, almost a quarter of an inch. What we're going to do is have that difference and stagger at the bottom. But I'm also not gonna let it worry me that much because the wow factor of it all being put together I think is really gonna distract from that problem. This step. We'll also close up our initial hole. If you have any threads dangling from that, make sure they're trimmed off before we sew. So - Teeny tiny. - I am gonna pin all the way down and just take this part really slowly. When we get to the very end is going to be kind of cumbersome. There's gonna be a lot of bunching up. So just take your time, take some breaths backstage at the beginning if you can. And we're going to do a scant quarter inch. So you're welcome to try an eighth of an inch. I don't wanna push my luck. And if you are getting bunched up, because there's so many layers you can try raising your presser foot, smoothing it down, and lowering your presser foot again. And if you have the ability to back stitch here would be a good place to do so. Otherwise, you could just drop your stitch length down. Teeny tiny. I'm dropping it down to 0.5 and I'm just gonna take a couple of short stitches here so that I can feel comfortable clipping my thread. I not these ends and sew them in like I did previously. The reason why I didn't

just take short stitches in the beginning is sometimes the bottom thread can get caught up and look kind of bunched on the back. I really wanted to avoid that. And then we'll flip the whole piece over. Ooh, such a glorious mess. I love this part. And we're gonna do the same process where we pin it together as close to the top as we can. Don't forget to bring your stitch length back to a normal, which in this case is 2.5. And you might still have to sew in your tails. But let's take a moment to appreciate these super fun pockets. Clip your ends or sew them in, whichever you prefer. I love how this turned out. I think it's so special. Look at these pockets, just gorgeous. And to close it up, we fold it over and wrap it around. I like this nice long tail, so you can put a lot of stuff inside it if you want, but you can shorten the tail if you'd like as well. Since we drafted our own pattern, it's easy to see how we can play around with proportion, make it a little bit wider, a little bit taller. I love imagining giving this as a gift and embroidering a sweet message on the inside. I love how this vintage pattern looks so contemporary when we just play around with the different fabrics we're using. But I also really love the idea of making the heirloom of my own that I can pass down.